

Sir

In a separate parcel I am sending you a small string of 26 beads & a copper instrument. If you consider them of sufficient interest I will be much obliged if you can give me information about them & let me have them back.

My own information from ~~the~~ natives is that the beads were made locally in the pre-Moskowitz days by a small band of natives under a pretty headman named Mkrabudi who lived on the Stiefpors river near where Fort Buzgus is today. The Bafudi Chief Tulara (circa 1780-1824) would never allow his people to interfere with or go near the band of the Mkrabudi. It is said that this headman used to manufacture these beads out of stone dug out of a deep hole: the stone was then fashioned into shape & went through a process of "cooking". It was during this process that the colour of the bead would be fixed according to the fancy of the manufacturer or the prevailing fashion of the time.

It is noticeable that the thinner light-blue beads when held up to the light lengthways show a pretty colouring but contain the same bubbles or sand marks as the third clear bead. It may have been that old Mkrabudi knew how to make glass & kept his secret well.

The light-blue beads are now regarded as valuable, the white ones as of less value & the dark blue of least value. The third

a little
rather
than a
name

clear stone in the necklace is said to be exceptional & of more value than all the rest put together. Some such beads were made yellow in colour.

The local Sepedi name of these beads is Mabatloa or Mabatloane.

It is said that they were also made on the Haenetsburg side of the Mifantsi river where there are still considerable numbers today; also at a stad at Tashakreal in this District, that of Malipa who originally came from the Barotsa.

In days gone by these beads used to be worn round children's waists.

It is said that no such beads have been made since the days of Moselkatye & the art is said to have been lost to the Bapedi.

These Mabatloa beads should not be confused with the very rare small yellow beads named "~~Itata~~^{Taya}" which are said to be much older & to have been made by the Mapalakatata the unknown ^{thought to be Araby} people who once long ago came to Sekukuniland, though the Mapalakatata are also said to have made the ~~Itata~~^{Taya} beads out of stone dug out of the ground. Only a few circles of the ~~Itata~~^{Taya} beads now remain in the possession of certain chiefs whose names I have. No common man would be allowed to possess a ~~Itata~~^{Taya} bead but these Mabatloa which I send can be worn by anyone.

Indus mountains on the farm Pashacknash.
 It had apparently been washed down in a
 storm. The picannins brought it to their
 master Mr. R. C. Chamley of Pashacknash
 P.O. Dickson, Lydenburg District, but they had
 broken the head off the ~~shaft~~ bar & the
 pieces are now separate.

I will be much obliged if you can kindly
 give me any information about either the
 beads or the copper instrument.

Will you kindly return both to me in due
 course.

D. J. H.

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